

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH SUBJECT: Mechanical Ventilation and Weaning Protocols

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DATE: December, 2011

Mechanical ventilation refers to the use of life support technology to perform the work of breathing for patients who are unable to do so adequately. Over 80% of critical care patients are ventilated at some point during their hospitalization. The use of prolonged intubation is associated with nosocomial pneumonia, cardiac associated morbidity and even death. The discontinuation of mechanical ventilation prematurely may result in re-intubation which is associated with similar complications as prolonged ventilation. Optimally weaning a patient from mechanical ventilation is an important role in the management of critically ill patients. This is a replication of McLean, Jenson, Schroeder, Gibney and Skodt (2006) study. The purpose of this study is to compare the efficacy and efficiency of nurse directed weaning protocols to wean patients from mechanical ventilation against traditional physician directed weaning. Development of standardized weaning protocols provides an evidence-based method for nursing practice and care of patients receiving ventilator support. Standardized weaning protocols can reduce the length of duration of mechanical ventilation and its associated complications.